

Deer Progress Report
February 14, 2011
Compiled by Sandy Ritchie with input from John Pratte
and the Wildlife Management Section

Accomplishments for Week of February 6 – 12

- **Deer Action Plan** – Sandy Ritchie continued to identify tasks, responsibilities, and timelines for elements of the Department's Deer Action Plan [DWA Habitat Management, Population Management, Predation, Education and Outreach, Deer Management Planning, Funding and Staffing, etc.]. The goal is to present a draft Action Plan for review by Department staff at a meeting in Bangor on Thursday, February 17. Ritchie will incorporate input and finalize a draft for distribution among interested stakeholders at a meeting tentatively scheduled for early-mid March.
- **Information and Outreach** - Pratte and Ritchie met with Information & Education Division to identify immediate press release needs and to discuss devoting the next edition [March] of the online magazine to deer.

Sandy Ritchie, John Boland, and Andrea Erskine attended the SAM Board Meeting on February 8th and briefed the Board on deer issues, planned winter aerial surveys, and fetus collections. Sandy distributed the 2-page issue profile, and as requested will provide electronic version to the Board for publication in the SAM News.

Lee Kantar drafted an article on recent helicopter surveys for publication as a press release and/or Insider or magazine article.

Travis Barrett attended the WMS Section Meeting [see below] and recorded video for Department website.

- **DWA Aerial Surveys** - As weather permitted, regional biologists conducted aerial surveys to document deer use in areas where landowners have requested active Deer Wintering Area [DWA] information and expressed interest in cooperative management efforts.

Regional biologists and appropriate Wildlife Resource Assessment and Augusta administrative staff met in Bangor on February 9th to coordinate plans and priorities for our annual DWA aerial surveys with Warden Pilot Charlie Later. This was followed with a discussion about other winter deer-related needs and elements of the developing Deer Action Plan. A DeLorme representative was on hand to discuss software needs to more efficiently document winter deer concentrations during flights and import the data into our GIS system.



- **Roadkill Fetus Collections** – As opportunities arise, Department staff continue to collect road-killed does and the number of fetuses per female to derive an index to fawn productivity and to provide information for fawn survival estimates.
- **Winter Severity Monitoring** – Staff monitored winter conditions [temperature, snow depths, deer sinking depths, and snow profile characteristics] at 26 individual monitoring stations throughout the state to estimate the impact of winter conditions on deer mortality.
- **Plan Agreements in LURC-zoned DWAs** – As needed, regional biologists and foresters met to develop plan agreements for timber harvesting activities in LURC-zoned DWAs.
- **Gardner Management Plans** – Region F [Enfield] completed development of draft management plans for 5 Gardner Habitat Management Areas [HMAs]. One plan has been approved by Gardner; Region F and Gardner will meet on February 14 to review the other 4 plans.

Planned Activities for Week of February 13

- Complete draft Deer Action Plan by Wednesday, February 16.
- Review draft Deer Action Plan at a meeting of regional biologists and deer project staff in Bangor on Thursday, February 17th.
- Develop a press release to encourage private pilots [guides, landowners, etc.] to report concentrations of deer seen while flying.
- Develop a letter / press release to commercial landowners updating them on winter aerial survey work.
- Finalize development of a Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund proposal for \$30,000 to help digitize DWA polygons with active deer use to provide to landowners for cooperative management. efforts
- As weather permits, continue DWA aerial surveys.
- Continue collecting road-killed does and the number of fetuses per female to derive an index to fawn productivity and to provide information for fawn survival estimates.
- As needed, work with foresters to develop plan agreements for timber harvesting activities in LURC-zoned DWAs.
- Region F and Gardner will meet on February 14 to review draft management plans for 4 HMAs.
- Continue monitoring winter conditions [temperature, snow depths, deer sinking depths, and snow profile characteristics] at 26 individual monitoring stations.